

The Poche Centre for Indigenous Health has had another challenging yet rewarding year with major achievements in all its key focus areas: Culture, Wellbeing and Mental Health; Aboriginal Children Health and Development; and Chronic Diseases. This includes the completion of major health research projects and reports; development of teaching and community resources; community outreach activities; collaborations with other Poche centres; and successful funding bids for key initiatives.

Over the past 12 months, UWA has also undergone a major transition to a new academic structure from 1 January 2017. Professor Dawn Freshwater, appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor, has been a strong supporter of the Poche Centre since its establishment at UWA. Professor Wendy Erber is the new PVC and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences.

A major achievement at the end of 2016 was having six Indigenous medical students graduate from UWA and commence their professional lives as doctors. Three of the six medical graduates – Vinka Barunga, Bianca Howard and Declan Scott – received Poche Leadership Development



Awards during their studies. Declan Scott also won the 2016 ANZCA/ASA Gilbert Troup Prize in Anaesthetics, the first Aboriginal student to achieve this prize. This highlights the importance of providing support and encouragement to our Indigenous students as we are seeing really fantastic results.

## Highlights 2016–2017

The Poche Centre at UWA undertakes research, teaching and community engagement across a broad spectrum of Aboriginal health and education areas, including three key focus areas.

## Culture, Wellbeing and Mental Health

**Research team:** Professor Pat Dudgeon, Poche Research Fellow; Professor Jill Milroy, PVC Indigenous Education and

Poche Director, UWA; and Professor Dawn Bessarab, Director, CAMDH.

- Poche Fellow Pat Dudgeon continued her groundbreaking work on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigenous Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP). The final report, *Solutions That Work: What the Evidence and Our People Tell Us*, released in late 2016 is available on the DPMC website [www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/solutions-work-what-evidence-and-our-people-tell-us](http://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/indigenous-affairs/solutions-work-what-evidence-and-our-people-tell-us)
- We were awarded the Centre for Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention, funded at \$1.75m over three years 2017-2019, by Department of Health. Pat Dudgeon leads the Centre, supported by Jill Milroy, with Tom Calma, from the Poche Network, as a consultant.
- We continued our 2016 collaboration with Black Dog Institute to further the development and production of an Indigenous Systems Approach to Suicide Prevention, funded at \$390,000 for 2017-19.
- Dawn Bessarab and Pat Dudgeon, with Mercy Care, held an Alternative to Suicide workshop on 22 February 2017. This is an innovative, peer-led





## Thanks from Sandy Thompson and the WACRH team

We are very grateful for the Poche funding and recognise the contribution in multiple ways. We utilise the artwork from the Poche painting in flyers and branding for community activities. It has been used on the Geraldton Sporting Aboriginal Corporation bus, resulting from the generous donation from Kaye Van Norton Poche. GSAC took a group of Geraldton youth to Perth to play in a football carnival and they ended up winning the Nicky Winmar Cup.

suicide prevention program from the Massachusetts Recovery Learning Community in the US.

- In July 2017, Emma Hunt and Naomi Lloyd, Indigenous representatives on the WA Medical Student Society, organised The Indigenous Health Panel, a one-day workshop for medical students and health professionals.
- Emma Hunt and Naomi Lloyd, with Spinphex, will present Connecting Culture to Health Outcomes in September 2017 with a focus on working with rural and remote Aboriginal patients.

## Aboriginal Children's Health and Development

**Research team:** Ms Carolyn Moylan, Poche Research Fellow; Professor Karen Edmonds, School of Paediatrics and Child Health and Research; and Associate Professor Daniel McAullay.

- There have been some changes in 2017 with Karen Edmonds leaving to take up a post with UNICEF in Afghanistan. Dan McAullay has taken over the role. Carolyn Moylan also decided to retire from the workforce in July 2017, having made a valuable contribution to the Koorliny Moort program.
- The KMAC final report, *Understanding an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's journey through paediatric care in Western Australia*, is now available. The research provides a qualitative analysis to identify health gaps in support systems assisting Aboriginal children and their families using hospital services at PMH.

## Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease for Aboriginal people

**Research team:** Professor Sandy Thompson, Director WACRH; Dr Sandy Hamilton, Poche Research Fellow; and Lenny Papertalk, Research Assistant.

- Dr Sandy Hamilton continued collaboration with University of Sydney Poche Centre to develop the iECG project and has trained Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service staff. The research assessing cardiac rehabilitation in rural WA has been published and is being used to advocate changes in services with politicians.
- A series of Heart Health online videos has been developed to assist Aboriginal people's understanding of the heart and prevention and management of heart disease. These are available on the WACRH website at [www.wacrh.uwa.edu.au/aboriginal-health-projects/understand-your-heart-heart-disease](http://www.wacrh.uwa.edu.au/aboriginal-health-projects/understand-your-heart-heart-disease)
- With the assistance of a student placement and local health communication resource company, WACRH has developed video resources of Aboriginal people talking about their cancer journey for use by Aboriginal people and health service providers. These resources are being developed for student learning.
- Lenny Papertalk is participating in the University of Melbourne Poche Leadership Course.

## Poche Leadership Development Awards

Seven Indigenous medical and dental students received Poche awards to build their leadership skills, knowledge and health engagement through conferences and networks at national and international levels.

- Monique Lucas and Jessie Hinder, UWA Doctor of Medicine students attended the Australian Indigenous Doctors Conference (AIDA): A journey of strength and resilience, held in Cairns, September 2016.
- Bianca Howard, Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery, and Daniel Hunt, completing the Doctor of Dental Medicine, attended the Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors' Congress in Auckland, New Zealand in November 2016.
- Emma Hunt (1st year Doctor of Medicine), Kelly Langford (3rd year Doctor of Medicine) and Jessie Hinder (Doctor of Medicine) attended the LIME Conference, Future of Indigenous Health Education: Leadership, Collaboration, Curriculum in Melbourne in April 2017.
- [www.news.uwa.edu.au/201704219570/features/uwa-medical-student-wins-limelight-award](http://www.news.uwa.edu.au/201704219570/features/uwa-medical-student-wins-limelight-award)

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